

Community resources

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courage is contagious

Viewing cable 02VATICAN1975, ENGAGING CATHOLIC CHURCH IN VENEZUELA

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#02VATICAN1975**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
02VATICAN1975	2002-04-22 15:14	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Vatican

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2011/06/21/116233/wikileaks-venezuelan-prelates.html>

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L VATICAN 001975

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SCE (MENNUTI)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/22/2012

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [VE](#) [VT](#)

SUBJECT: ENGAGING CATHOLIC CHURCH IN VENEZUELA

REF: STATE: 73097

CLASSIFIED BY: AMBASSADOR JIM NICHOLSON, REASON E.O. 12958 1.5 (B,D)

1. (C) PER REFTTEL, AMBASSADOR MET WITH VATICAN FM EQUIVALENT ARCHBISHOP JEAN LOUIS TAURAN EVENING OF APRIL 19 TO URGE THE HOLY SEE TO TAKE AN ACTIVE AND APPROPRIATE ROLE IN SUPPORT OF VENEZUELAN DEMOCRACY. TAURAN WAS WELL BRIEFED ON THE SITUATION IN VENEZUELA. AS USUAL, HE REFERRED TO THE POPE'S STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION (PROMOTING RECONCILIATION AND PEACE), GIVEN AT THE WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17 GENERAL AUDIENCE. HE WAS GUARDEDLY POSITIVE ON THE CHURCH TALKING A PLACE IN PRESIDENT CHAVEZ' "NATIONAL DIALOGUE," BUT SAID THAT THE POSITION OF THE CHURCH VIS A VIS CHAVEZ WAS UNCERTAIN, GIVEN THE LATTER'S HISTORICAL HOSTILITY TO THE CHURCH. AMBASSADOR AGREED, RECALLING THAT CHAVEZ HAD CALLED THE CHURCH "A CANCER" ON THE VENEZUELAN BODY POLITIC JUST A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO.

2. (C) TAURAN SAID THE CHURCH HAD TO BE CAREFUL, THAT EVEN THOUGH TIME WAS SHORT, THEY WOULD TAKE A LOW PROFILE UNTIL THE EARLY POST-COUP PERIOD PLAYS OUT. HE SAID CHAVEZ IS TALKING RECONCILIATION NOW BUT, TAURAN AVERRED, CHAVEZ WAS NOT AT ALL TRUSTWORTHY. THE HOLY SEE FEARS A NEGATIVE REACTION TO THE FACT THAT THE CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF CARACAS, VELASCO GARCIA, HAD SIGNED A DOCUMENT AT THE SATURDAY INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENTIAL USURPER CARMONA.

3. (C) TAURAN COUNSELED THE USG TO "PRESSURE" THE MILITARY AND BUSINESS CLASSES IN VENEZUELA TO SUPPORT THE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION NOW THAT CHAVEZ WAS BACK IN POWER. HE SPECULATED THAT SOME GENERALS WHO HAD SUPPORTED THE COUP, HAVING SEEN THAT A CARMONA PRESIDENCY LOOKED LIKE IT WOULD INVESTIGATE CORRUPTION SCANDALS IN VENEZUELA, DECIDED THAT PERHAPS CHAVEZ WAS THE LESSER OF TWO EVILS. TAURAN DECRIED THE CONTINUING PRESENCE OF "THOSE 15 CUBAN ADVISORS" AND

RECALLED THAT WHEN THE POPE MET FIDEL CASTRO IN 1998, FIDEL
HAD SAID THERE WAS A YOUNG NEW LEADER ON THE SCENE, CALLING
CHAVEZ "SPLENDID." TAURAN CLOSED BY ASSURING US THAT HE
WOULD SPEAK TO HIS NUNCIO OVER THE WEEKEND, AND WOULD STAY IN
CLOSE TOUCH AS WE GO FORWARD.
NICHOLSON